



“ The stronger the Family,  
the stronger the Army,  
because Families improve  
combat readiness. ”

Honorable John McHugh  
Secretary of the Army

Family  
safe is Family strong!



ARMY STRONG.



ARMY SAFE  
IS ARMY STRONG

# Family Engagement Kit

After more than 11 years of sustained combat operations, Army Families are getting the recognition they deserve as the cornerstone of our force. Family life has a direct impact on everything our Soldiers do, including decision making that could mean the difference between life and death. That's why we need YOU in our fight against accidental loss!

This Family Engagement Kit contains all the tools and resources you need to become a safety leader at home. Your Soldier is expected to adhere to the standards on duty, and it should be no different when he or she is away from the watchful eye of their leaders at work. As a spouse, parent, sibling or other close relative, you have as much or even greater authority as your Soldier's chain of command. Letting that influence remain untapped is a waste of your potential — you, too, know what right looks like, so ensure your Soldier does what's right all the time.

With our operational drawdown nearly complete, more Soldiers are at home station now than any time since Sept. 11, 2001. Enjoy this hard-earned Family time, and thank you for being part of our safety team. I have no doubt our Soldiers will stay safe in your capable and caring hands!

Army Safe is Army Strong!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy J. Edens".

Timothy J. Edens  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding General  
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

# Major Concerns

- **Private Motor Vehicles (PMVs)**
  - From 1 Oct 2011 to 30 Sep 2012 (FY12), 109 Soldiers were killed in off-duty PMV accidents.
- **Of the 109 fatalities, 88 percent were E-5 or below.**
- **The average age of Soldiers killed in off-duty accidents: 25 years old**



# Private Motor Vehicle Accident Trends

- Leading causes of PMV accident crashes were distracted driving, speed, alcohol, and fatigue.
- More fatal accidents involved sedans than any other kind of vehicle.
- The majority of fatal accidents occurred between midnight and 6 a.m.

While seat belt use is mandatory for all Soldiers, some continue to drive without buckling up. Even though we know seat belts save lives, sadly, many of our Soldiers killed last year were not wearing one.

# Private Motor Vehicle-2 (Motorcycles)

- **49 Soldiers** died on motorcycles in FY12, compared to 45 Soldiers in FY11. Speed continues to be the leading cause of fatal motorcycle accidents.
- Like many other skills, riding skills are perishable. Additional training is offered at most installations and is now required by Army Regulation 385-10.
- Consider the selection of a new motorcycle a Family decision. To get more information on motorcycles, visit our website at <https://safety.army.mil>.

# Leading Causes of PMV Accidents

- Speeding
- Aggressive driving
- Distracted driving
- Fatigue
- Alcohol



# Speeding

- Speeding is driving faster than the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), on average, one thousand Americans are killed every month in speeding-related crashes. This is despite advancements in vehicle safety and passenger protection.
- National crash data shows that 25-30 percent of all fatal accidents are attributed to speed.



# Distracted Driving

■ In 2011, 3,331 people were killed and 387,000 injured in crashes involving a distracted driver.

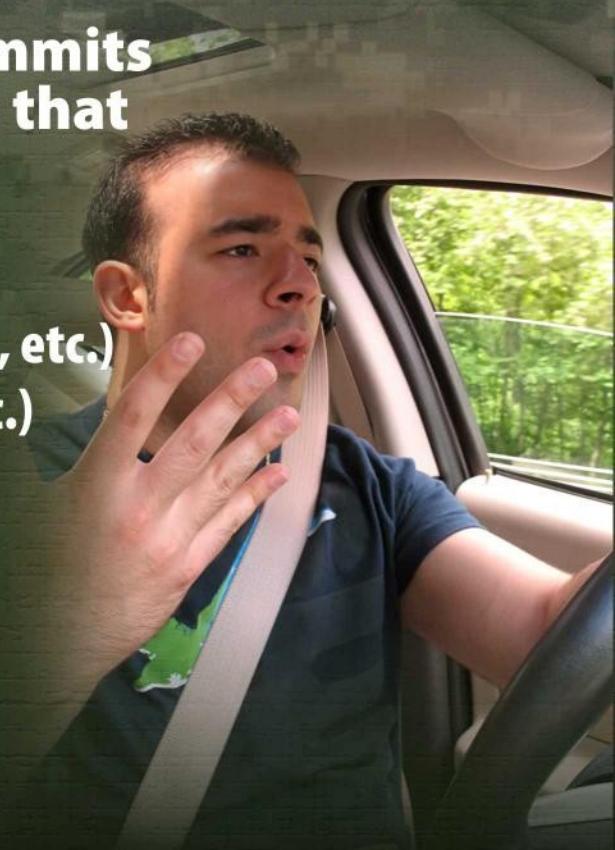
■ Sending or receiving a text takes a driver's eyes off the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent - at 55 mph - of driving the length of an entire football field, blind.



Action	Number of times more likely to have an accident
Reaching for a moving object	9
Looking at an external object	3.7
Reading	3
Applying makeup	3
Dialing a hand-held device (e.g., cell phone)	3
Talking or listening on hand-held device	1.3

# Aggressive Driving

- An aggressive driver is someone who commits a combination of moving traffic offenses that endangers other persons or property.
- Three categories of aggression:
  - Lack of courtesy (obscene gestures, refusing to yield, etc.)
  - Breaking the rules (speeding, running red lights, etc.)
  - Angry driving (tailgating, frequent lane changes, flashing lights, etc.)
- Consequences include:
  - Physical and mental harm
  - Legal and financial hardship
- In its extreme form, aggressive driving can escalate into *road rage*.



# **Falling Asleep at the Wheel is No Laughing Matter**



**Thag Anderson becomes the first fatality as a result of falling asleep at the wheel.**

# Fatigue

- We spend one-third of our lives sleeping.
- Approximately 70 million people in the United States are affected by one or more sleep problems.
- Drowsy drivers cause an estimated 100,000 crashes each year.
- Fatigue-related crashes are more likely to result in a fatality.
- Early signs of fatigue:
  - Yawning repeatedly
  - Can't remember having driven the past few miles
  - Difficulty focusing or keeping eyes open

[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)

[www.drowsydriving.org](http://www.drowsydriving.org)



# Travel Risk Planning System

- TRiPS is a tool to help you plan your drive.
- TRiPS is designed to reinforce common-sense driving, such as staying alert, not drinking, getting adequate sleep, wearing your seat belt, and slowing down.
- Last year the Army lost, on average, one Soldier every three days in a PMV accident.
- Do your part. Fill out TRiPS with your spouse. Be aware of driving risks and take the appropriate precautions.

TRAVEL RISK  
**TRiPS**  
PLANNING SYSTEM



**TRiPS has proven to be a lifesaver.**

<https://trips.safety.army.mil>

# Alcohol

- In 2011, there were 9,878 fatalities in crashes involving a driver with a BAC of .08 or higher, accounting for 31 percent of total traffic fatalities for the year.
- Every day, nearly 30 people in the United States die in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver. This amounts to one death every 48 minutes.
- In 2011, **181 children** were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes.
- **Consequences for military personnel:**
  - Enlisted Soldiers may face penalties including forfeiture of pay, reduction of rank, 45 days extra duty and 60 days restriction
  - Officers may also face forfeiture of pay and 30 days arrest in quarters or 60 days restriction
  - Accidents involving alcohol may be ruled **Not in the Line of Duty** and result in the loss of Family benefits

# Other Off-Duty Activities

In addition to PMV accidents, other leading causes of off-duty fatalities include:

- **Water-related activities**  
(watercraft/fishing/swimming)
- **Pedestrian activities**  
(struck by vehicle/train/bicycle)
- **Weapons-related activities**  
(mishandling/firing of a weapon)
- **Sporting activities**  
(basketball/football)



# Water-Related Activities

- During FY12, four Soldiers died in swimming or boating accidents.
- The majority of water-related accidents occurred during the weekend.



## Intervention/Prevention Measures

- Swim only in authorized areas and avoid alcohol
- Always have someone accompany you when swimming
- Take a safe boating course and wear a personal flotation device
- Avoid being a victim of someone boating under the influence

Check out our interactive water safety website at:  
<https://safety.army.mil/SafetyCity/Pages/Water/WaterSafety.aspx>

# Pedestrian Activities

- During FY12, six Soldiers died as pedestrians. Five were killed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- Of these, one Soldier was attempting to aid victims of a separate vehicle accident.

## Intervention/Prevention Measures

- Walk on sidewalks and use crosswalks
- If no sidewalks are available, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible
- Have a designated driver or use a taxi if consuming alcohol
- Be extremely careful of traffic when you stop to help a motorist in distress
- Consider reflective gear when walking at night
- Know local laws pertaining to pedestrians

# Weapons-Related Activities

- During FY12, six Soldiers died from negligent discharges.
- Four deaths occurred between 10 p.m. and 3:30 a.m.
- Four accidents were known to have involved alcohol.
- Three incidents involved NCOs, and all were reportedly using alcohol.



## Intervention/Prevention Measures

- Take a gun safety class to get and stay familiar with your weapons
- Visit the Range & Weapons Safety Toolbox: <https://safety.army.mil/POWSafety>
- Do not handle weapons when consuming alcohol
- Always **THINK** weapons safety:
  - Treat every weapon as if it's loaded
  - Handle every weapon with care
  - Identify the target before you fire
  - Never point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot
  - Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire



# Sporting Activities

- During FY12, basketball and football were the Army's top injury-causing activities.
- Fractures, dislocations, sprains and strains were the leading injuries.
- Over-training is a growing problem.



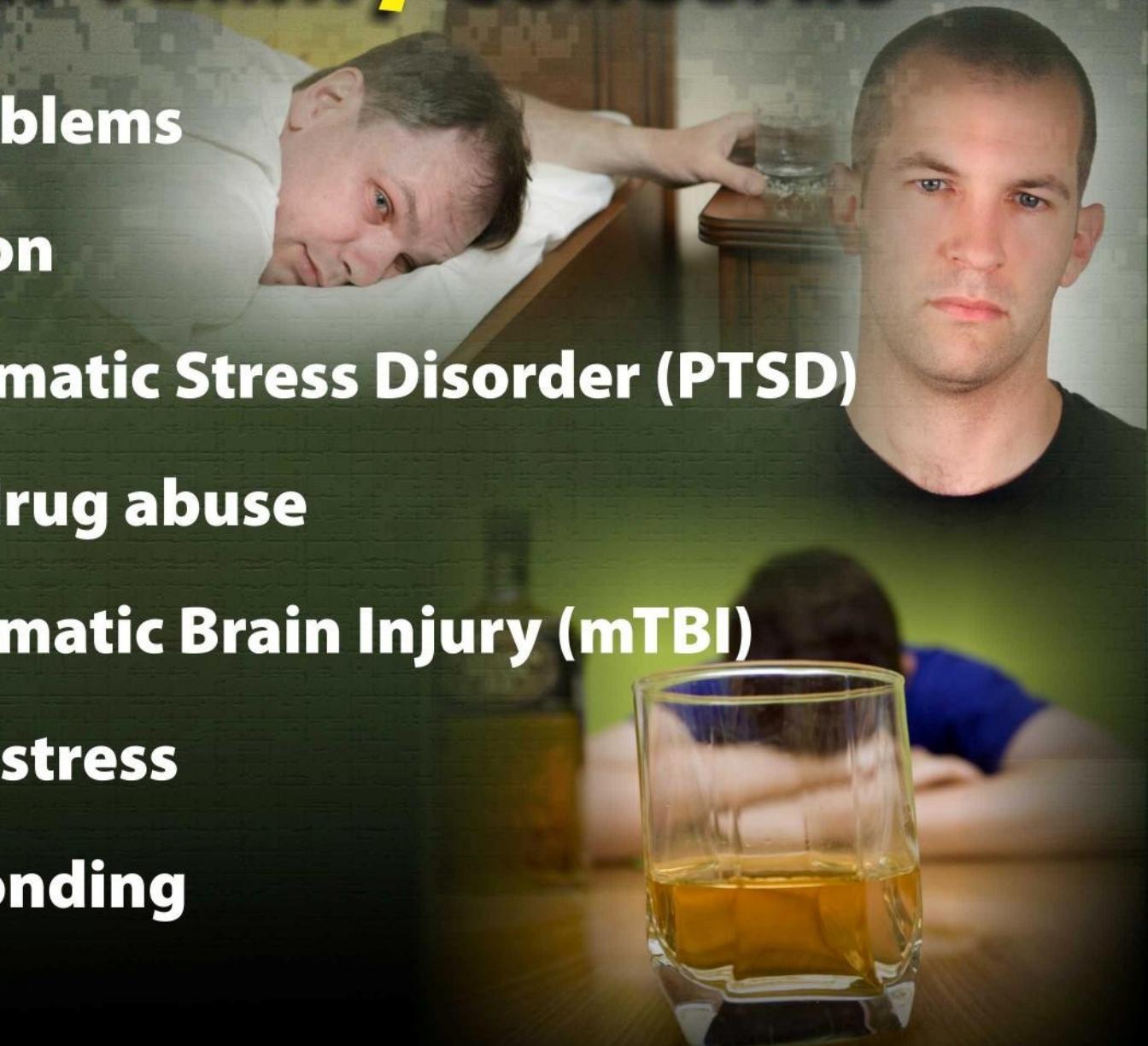
## Intervention/Prevention Measures

- Wear appropriate protective equipment
- Ensure suitable warm up and stretching prior to activity
- Monitor fluid intake to prevent dehydration
- Attend training for specialized activities
- Check out the Ground Risk Assessment Tool at <https://grat.safety.army.mil>



# Other Family Concerns

- Sleep problems
- Depression
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Alcohol/drug abuse
- Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI)
- Financial stress
- Family bonding



# Sleep Problems

- Difficulty falling asleep
- Difficulty staying asleep
- Stopping breathing during sleep
- Excessive snoring
- Limb jerking
- Waking up still feeling tired
- Difficulty staying awake during the day



**All of these problems are treatable.**

Check out [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org) for more information.

# Depression

- Symptoms of depression may differ for everyone; however, the following are some examples that many may experience:
  - Persistently sad, anxious, or "empty" feelings
  - Feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, guilt or worthlessness
  - Irritability, restlessness, fatigue or decreased energy
  - Loss of interest in activities or hobbies once pleasurable, including sex
  - A change in sleep pattern or excessive sleepiness
  - Overeating or appetite loss
  - Thoughts of suicide, suicide attempts
- The Army suicide rate increased from 9.6 per 100,000 in 2004 to an estimated 24.1 per 100,000 in 2011.
- Depression is treatable and suicide is preventable!

[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

# PTSD

- **Currently, PTSD affects approximately 20 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, or more than 300,000 Soldiers.**
- **Symptoms include flashbacks, excessive nightmares, isolation from others, numbing of emotions, hyper-arousal or irritability.**
- **PTSD may worsen without treatment and can show up several months or years after a person leaves the battlefield.**
- **Studies report as many as 66 percent of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans suffering from PTSD may not be receiving treatment.**
- **For more information, contact your local veterans health administration.**

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org) [www.resilience.army.mil](http://www.resilience.army.mil)  
<https://www.militarymentalhealth.org>

# **mTBI (Concussion)**

- **mTBI: A relatively mild blow to the brain can impair memory, attention, mental organization and logical thinking.**
- **Common signs and symptoms:**
  - Headaches or neck pains that do not go away
  - Difficulty remembering, concentrating or making decisions
  - Slowness in thinking, speaking, acting or reading
  - Mood changes
  - Getting lost or easily confused
  - Changes in sleep patterns or feeling tired all the time
  - Blurred vision, eyes that tire easily, increased sensitivity to light

# Commonalities:

## ■ Sleep Loss, PTSD, Alcohol Abuse, and mTBI



HEALTH	WORK	RELATIONSHIP	SAFETY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Increased risk for depression</li><li>- Impaired concentration</li><li>- Slowed reaction times</li><li>- Poor work performance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Errors</li><li>- Impaired concentration</li><li>- Slowed reaction times</li><li>- Poor work performance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Impatient</li><li>- Cranky</li><li>- Irritable</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Slowed reaction times</li><li>- Higher incidence of workplace and traffic accidents</li><li>- Microsleeps (unintended mini-naps)</li></ul>

# Financial Stress

- People experiencing financial stress are more likely to numb their anxiety by drinking, smoking, overeating and practicing other unhealthy coping behaviors. This in turn leads to more stress.
- Family finances may change when your Soldier returns home and is no longer receiving hazardous duty and Family separation pay.
- Emotions, both positive and negative, can drive spending and cause you to go deep into debt.
- Recognize that you and your spouse can experience anxiety, frustration and a sense of hopelessness as your debt piles up.

**Make a spending plan and stick to it.**

# Family Bonding

- Coming together as a couple after deployment isn't always easy.
- Each person has grown and changed during the separation and taken on new responsibilities.
- Most couples argue about three things: children, money and sex.
- Be patient with yourself and your Family. Fatigue, confusion and worry — common during a transition — can lead to short tempers.
- It's a two-way street. Negotiate the transition of Family duties as your home returns to normal.
- Know when to seek help.
- **Comprehensive Soldier Fitness: Know your baseline for the four dimensions of strength (emotional, social, spiritual, and Family) by taking the Global Assessment Tool at <http://armylive.dodlive.mil/index.php/2009/12/csf-global-assessment-tool/>.**



# Summary

- During FY12, the Army lost more than three times as many Soldiers in off-duty accidents than on-duty accidents.
- Be aware of the at-risk activities that can affect you and your Family, especially if you have a redeploying Soldier.
- If you or your Soldier are having issues, please ask for help. There are many sources available to you and your Family. One of the best is [www.resilience.army.mil](http://www.resilience.army.mil).

*Thank you for all you do in helping  
keep our Soldiers safe at home!*



# Questions?

